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PROGRAM Good Morning America

STATION WJLA TV  
ABC Network

DATE August 3, 1982 7:00 AM CITY Washington, DC

SUBJECT Secret Warning to Naval Bases

JACK ANDERSON: A secret warning has gone out to US naval bases. It states that our major naval bases are vulnerable to terrorist attack. It further suggests that an attempt might be made Iranian terrorists.

Here's the reason: Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini is reported to be in a rage over the US offer to conduct joint naval maneuvers with Persian Gulf countries. This offer was intended to counteract Iran's military moves in the Persian Gulf. So the Iranians may try to retaliate by raiding or sabotaging a naval airbase.

The secret alert mentions four bases as particularly defenseless. They're the bases at Norfolk, Jacksonville, San Diego and Seattle. Norfolk is regarded as the most vulnerable. The security is so poor that the Pentagon investigators gave a startling estimate of the damage that could be done. They warned that more than a billion dollars worth of naval aircraft could be destroyed in just one hour by a team of no more than five saboteurs.

A third to a half of the Navy's total air power is vulnerable to sabotage. Now one reason for this appalling weakness is that our naval bases are located in port cities that have limited space and facilities for protective measures. But the investigators also found that the Navy hasn't done much to tighten security at the bases. Oh, there are guards at all of them, of course, but the investigators warned that the guards could easily be overpowered by terrorists.

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And that isn't all. The investigators also warned that foreign spies probably have penetrated the naval bases already. The may have stolen top secret radar equipment. Now the spies probably have taught the terrorists just how easy it is to sneak into these bases.